**A Tribute to Doug Tilbury**

By Peter Tilbury

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Douglas lan Evans Tilbury 22-03-34 to 15-07-22 " Doug to all his friends ".

Doug sadly passed away at his home in Ellesborough in July surrounded by his close family.

He was born at the family home in Parslows Hillocks, the small hamlet of houses that has the Pink and Lily pub as its focal point.

Doug was third generation Tilbury to live in the hamlet. At the time the Tilbury family owned all four Hillock cottages. He lived with his parents and three siblings in No 1 & 2, his grandparents lived in No 3 and one of their workers in No4. The third child and first son of Reg and Rose Tilbury, Reg was one of the last wood bodgers working in the Hampden Estate beech woods producing spindles for the High Wycombe furniture trade.

Doug attended St Johns, Lacey Green primary school, followed by a secondary education at Mill End School, High Wycombe until he was 15.

When he left school, he joined his father Reg working in the woods and on the family smallholding, but he described his father as a Victorian taskmaster who made him work seven days a week and paid him a pittance. He plotted and planned his escape and applied to the RAF to complete his National Service.

Douglas got his call up papers and joined the RAF in August 1952 much to his father's annoyance!

He recalled his anxiety the day his father dropped him at Aylesbury railway station to catch a train to Manchester and then onward to RAF Padgate near Warrington for his initial training. He had never left the family home before, not even for a holiday!

His assigned trade was jet turbine mechanic and following his training he was posted to 56 squadron in Cambridgeshire, a jet fighter squadron who at the time were operating Meteor Mk8s.

He really enjoyed his time in the RAF, and particularly loved the camaraderie of his colleagues and recalled many happy social moments, his passion was organ music and ballroom dancing.

Following the completion of his service he returned to the family business and branched out on his own as a forestry and garden contractor, and then added Christmas poultry and potatoes to the farm side of the business followed by pigs and more cattle. Throughout the 1960s and into the 70s he was fully occupied running a small mixed farm, but being aa one man band by this stage he rarely got a day off. Making a living from such a modest acreage got more and more difficult.

Towards the end of the 1970s he started to work more regularly as a contractor for larger arable farms. He particularly enjoyed combine driving throughout the Summer. Many of you will remember him working right into his mid seventies, his tractor was a regular sight locally cutting hedges and topping horse paddocks.

A huge part of Doug's life was dedicated to St John's Church and he continued to attend weekly services until a couple of years ago when he lost driving licence due fading eyesight. He joined the church choir when he was 10 years old and continued until 85 years, he loved music and enjoyed the company of his fellow choristers. He served as church warden to both Rev

Bernard Houghton and Raymond Maynard, and he always loved ringing the church bell. He always regretted Lacey Green didn't have a full set of bells and later joined the bell ringing group at Wendover church in his retirement.

In his younger days much of his social life was based around the Princes Risborough Young Farmers Club, where he eventually served as Chairman and later became the Club Leader on the advisory committee. It was at a dance in the Walsingham Hall, Princes Risborough that he met his wife, Kathleen. On their first date he took her home to collect eggs from his hens and feed the cows.

Four years later they got married at the parish church in Princes Risborough and spent 67 happy years together.

Doug was a founder member of the Risborough Historic Farm Machinery Club. Initially an idea from four friends meeting for a pint in the Pink and Lily in the early 80s. By the 90s they were a club of over 50 members meeting monthly and regularly organising ploughing matches, tractor run pub crawls and threshing demonstrations.

As Doug approached his eighties he embraced the new age of computers, email and the Internet. Once he had mastered his new IPad he was able to fully engage as a member of the Lacey Green History Group. He also served as a Lacey Green parish councillor for around ten years during his younger days.

Doug will forever be missed by family and friends and remembered for always being kind, caring and polite, the perfect gentleman!